

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-9 and 11-20 to read as follows:

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1 1. (Amended) A method for determining a threshold value (O_{\max} , O_{\min} , O_{TR})
2 serving to limit an output signal of a processing unit into which an input signal has been
3 fed, characterized in that a level of the input signal is determined and that the threshold
4 value (O_{\max} , O_{\min} , O_{TR}) is set as a function of the level of the input signal.

1 1 2. (Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein from the said level a mean level
2 (I) is derived on the basis of which the threshold value (O_{\max} , O_{\min} , O_{TR}) is set.

1 1 3. (Amended) The method as in claim 2, wherein the threshold value (O_{TR}) is set
2 by a differential amount (TR_{\max}) above the mean level (I) of the input signal.

1 1 4. (Amended) The method as in claim 2, wherein the mean level (I) is derived
2 from the input signal $s(t)$ along the following formula:

$$I = \frac{1}{T} \times \int_0^T |s(t)| \times dt$$

1 4 whereby an averaging function is performed over a time interval T.

1 1 5. (Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein a maximum threshold value
2 (O_{\max}) is established.

1 1 6. (Amended) The method as in claim 5, wherein the maximum threshold value
2 (O_{\max}) is so selected as to be equal to an upper comfort level of a hearing-impaired

3 person.

1 7. (Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein a minimum threshold value
2 (O_{min}) is established.

1 8. (Amended) The method as in claim 7, characterized in that the minimum
2 threshold value (O_{min}) is so selected as to be equal to an output level that results from an
3 input level of about 80 dB and the corresponding amplification at that input level that is
4 produced for a hearing-impaired person.

1 9. (Amended) The method as in claim 3, wherein the differential amount
2 (TR_{max}) is adjusted along a compression ratio for a hearing-impaired person.

1 11. (Amended) Application of the method per claim 6 for operation of a hearing
2 aid by a hearing-impaired person.

1 12. (Amended) A system for implementing the method per claim 1, characterized
2 in that a processing unit is provided which receives an input signal and which permits
3 within the processing unit the determination of a threshold value (O_{max} , O_{min} , O_{TR}) for the
4 purpose of limiting the output signal, said threshold value (O_{max} , O_{min} , O_{TR}) being
5 adjustable as a function of the level of the input signal.

1 13. (Amended) The system as in claim 12, wherein from the level of the input
2 signal a mean level (I) can be determined by averaging.

1 14. (Amended) The system as in claim 13, wherein the threshold value (O_{TR}) can
2 be adjusted to a point which by a differential amount (TR_{max}) is above the mean level (I)
3 of the input signal.

1 15. (Amended) The system as in claim 14, wherein the mean level (I) can be
2 derived from the input signal $s(t)$ by employing the following formula:

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$$I = \frac{1}{T} \times \int_0^T |s(t)| \times dt$$

Cont where an averaging function can be performed over a time interval T .

1 16. (Amended) The system as in claim 12, wherein it permits a maximum
2 threshold value (O_{max}) to be established.

1 17. (Amended) The system as in claim 16, wherein the maximum threshold value
2 (O_{max}) can be selected to be equal to an upper comfort level of a hearing-impaired person.

1 18. (Amended) The system as in claim 12, wherein it permits a minimum
2 threshold value (O_{min}) to be established.

19 19. (Amended) The system as in claim 18, wherein the minimum threshold value
2 (O_{min}) can be selected to be equal to the mean amplification value for a hearing-impaired
3 person.

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20. (Amended) The system as in claim 13, wherein the differential amount
(TR_{max}) can be adjusted corresponding to a compression ratio for a hearing-impaired
person.